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Col. Jim Heald

AFRL Vice Commander Colonel Heald retires

by Jill Bohn, AFRL Public Affairs

WRIGHT - PATTERSON AFB, Ohio — Air Force Research Laboratory Vice Commander Colonel Jim Heald officially retired during a ceremony held in his honor on Monday, April 9 at the Materials and Manufacturing Directorate cafetorium.

Heald served as the AFRL Vice Commander since June 1998. In the position, he played a key role in directing the Air Force's science and technology program with an annual budget of over \$1.4 billion, with an additional \$1.1 billion from the laboratory's customers. Approximately 5,400 people in the laboratory's technology directorates and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research execute the science and technology program.

A native of Ft Leavenworth, Kan., and graduate of Saguaro High School in Scottsdale, Ariz., he earned a bachelor of science degree in computer science and mathematics from the United States Air Force Academy in 1975. Heald earned his master of science degree in computer science from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1976.

He was awarded the Commander's Trophy as the top Graduate at Squadron Officer School in 1982, was a distinguished graduate of Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB in 1989, graduated from Defense Systems Management College in 1991, and was an outstanding graduate of Air War College in 1993. He is certified to Level III in the Air Force Materiel Command's Acquisition Professional Development Program in both the test and evaluation and the systems, planning, research development, and engineering functional areas and is certified to Level II in the program management functional area.

Heald attended undergraduate navigator training at Mather AFB CA and in 1976 was awarded navigator wings, the ATC Commander's Trophy as top graduate, and the Ira J. Husik Award as top flyer. In 1977, he earned top academic and top overall weapon systems officer during F-4 training at Homestead AFB, Fla. While assigned to the 58th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Eglin AFB, Fla., he maintained combat alert status, was nuclear weapon certified, and served as the maintenance liaison officer.

In 1979, he was assigned to the 36th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Osan AFB, Republic of Korea, where he was an Instructor Weapon Systems Officer (WSO), Standardization and Evaluation Liaison Officer, and executive officer to the Deputy Commander for Operations. In 1980, Col. Heald was assigned to the 43d Tactical Fighter Squadron at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. He served as an Instructor WSO, Wing Simulator Officer, Wing Supervisor of Flying, Alert Force Commander, and Liaison Officer to the Federal Aviation Administration in the Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center during the controller strike.

From May 1982 to December 1985, Heald was stationed at the United States Air Force Academy and served as assistant professor of Computer Science, Honor and Ethics Liaison Officer, and Department of Computer Science Executive Officer. In 1986, Heald attended the USAF Test Pilot School where he was Class 86A leader and was a Distinguished Graduate. Following graduation, he was assigned to the 6512th Test Squadron, 6510th Test Wing, Edwards AFB CA, serving as the project manager for the F-4 High Performance Tank Stability and Control Flight Test and was Air Launched Cruise Missile chase qualified.

In 1987, he was assigned to the F-15 Combined Test Force as the Performance, Flying Qualities, and Terrain Following Branch Chief. He became the fifth WSO to fly in the F-15E and was project aircrew for the Ada-Based Integrated Control System (ABICS). In July 1989, he returned to the USAF Test Pilot School at Edwards AFB, Calif., where he served as Director of Student Training Aircraft, and was a Performance Phase evaluator for the C-130.

In February 1992, Heald transferred to the 3246th Test Wing, Eglin AFB, as Special Assistant to the

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Wing Commander where he was responsible for developing the Objective Wing Reorganization Plan. In September 1993, he became the Commander of the 40th Flight Test Squadron, 46th Operations Group, 46th Test Wing, Air Force Development Test Center. He was responsible for the test operations and maintenance of 25 F-15, F-111, C-130, and UH-1N aircraft.

In September 1994, he was reassigned as the Chief, Air Force Development Test Center Commander's Action Group, serving as the Center Resource Allocation focal point. In July 1995, Col. Heald was selected as a Secretary of Defense Fellow assigned to Corporate Development, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Bethesda, Md. Heald assumed command of the 46th Operations Group in July 1996.

He is rated as a Master Navigator, with more than 2,300 flight hours. He has flown over 30 aircraft including the F-4, F-15B/D/E, T-43 and NC-131H.

Heald's decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Force Commendation Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Combat Readiness Medal. @